

**Meeting Minutes, West Warwick Charter Review Commission
Thursday, May 13, 2010 6:30PM
Place: Town Council Chambers, Town Hall
1170 Main Street West Warwick, RI**

- A. Meeting called to order by Commission Chairman Henseler at 6:30PM**
- B. Pledge of Allegiance**
- C. Roll Call-**

Members present:

Sean Henseler	Giovanni Calise
Brian Tucker	Frank Parente, Sr.
Mark Bourget	Felix Appolonia
Joseph Gardosik	Ronald Nunes
Barbara Tabak	

- D. Secretary determines a quorum is present. No audience or guest speakers present at start of meeting.**

- E. Motion to waive reading of minutes and accept made by Ronald Nunes. Second by Vice Chair Calise.
Motion carries by unanimous vote.**

- F.. Chairman Henseler review of old business- none. Chairman recommends Commission starts to review of Articles until guest speakers arrive.**

- G. Article 2001- No change for now but possible recommendation to Council to do away with this position if not required by state law.**

- H. Article 2002- No Change**

- I. Article 2003- Recommend a GA bill to allow town to clean-up minor language within the Charter without having to place on ballot.**

- J. Guest Speaker: Town of West Warwick Pension Board Member Norman Landroche.**

Question and answer session with Charter Commission:

Q: Is there a conflict of interest with Commission Members collecting a town pension from debating the rules and regulations of West Warwick pensions?

A: Both Mr. Landroche and Chairman Henseler agree that participation in the debate is OK, voting on any issues should be checked.

Q. Should a Mayor or Town Manager have the right to overrule the Pension Board and remove a pension recipient or create a private contract with a pensioner to make a pension irrevocable?

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A. No, the pensioner contributes to their own pension applies to the pension board and no private agreements can be made with other officials. Both the Pension Board and the Town must abide by the terms of the pension and contract law.

Mr. Landroche recommends:

- To qualify for Pension board position at least one person should be a Member with union standing but not drawing a pension
- The current board recertifies disability pensioners but a requirement to do so is not in writing
- No one with disability pension should be able to sit on the Board.

Q. Is there anything to change, add or remove from the Charter to make the Board operate more efficiently or transparently?

A. The board needs to maintain its autonomy- the ability to do RFPs, client recommendations, etc.. Suggests quarterly statements from Board to Town Council to keep updated. Right now the public has access to all meetings via the published agenda, meeting minutes and open meetings.

Audience Member:

Louis Pinga, 40 Newell St.- Recommends keeping Financial Town Meeting and feels it is prudent to delay the meeting until after the State budget is announced. Recommends that Town Council be directly involved with the Pension Board and have regular oversight of all commissions/boards.

K. Articles 2005/2006- No change. Discussion by the Commission that the Town check the feasibility to conduct its own Water Authority.

L. Guest Speaker: Town of West Warwick Fire Chief Joseph Baris.

Recommendations and question and answer session with Charter Commission:

Chief Baris recommends that requiring the Council to maintain a head of Department of Personnel/Human Resources would greatly improve efficiency of the Fire Chiefs position. Recommends an Assistant Chief position be mandated and that the Fire Department should handle its own grant writing responsibilities. Does not suggest that current requirement of Bachelors Degree be removed from consideration of Fire Chiefs position. Questions why the removal of the Town Clerk by the Town Council requires a super majority vote and the Chiefs position requires only a simple majority.

Q. Is there a dollar amount that current out-to-bid limit should be raised to to save time and improve efficiency?

A. No specific amount in mind but likes the idea of the out-to-bid amount being tied into a percent of the overall budget.

Q. Should more years be added to current 3-year supervisory requirement before being considered for position of Fire Chief?

A. No, 3-year supervisory role is fine, a firefighter would not go through the ranks any quicker.

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M. Article 706F- Chairman Henseler to e-mail Town Manager about town getting on MA price list.

N. Agenda for next meeting: Continue from Article 2101 to end of Charter and conduct further discussion of items to add to final list of Council recommendations.

**O. Motion to adjourn made by Mark Bourget, motion second by Ronald Nunes. Motion carries by unanimous vote.
Meeting adjourned at 8:50PM.**